



CONGRESSMAN HENRY A. WAXMAN NEWS

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WAXMAN PREDICTS SAUDI ARMS DEAL WILL FAIL

An optimistic Congressman Henry A. Waxman, predicted that Congress will reject the Reagan Administration's request for complex military equipment and super radar AWACS planes long requested by Saudi Arabia.

Waxman said,

"It is widely recognized in Congress that the chances of a new Arab war against Israel would be greatly increased if the Saudis gain the equipment and planes they are seeking.

This elaborate gear would give the Arabs the ability to maintain constant detailed surveillance over land, air and sea. Israel would be precluded entirely from the kind of secret, sudden attacks which proved so essential to Israeli military success in the past."

According to Waxman, many senior Congressmen friendly to the Saudis have misgivings about the current proposal. Many of them see direct and frightening parallels between Saudi Arabia and Iran. They fear that precious secret equipment and the uniquely powerful AWACS planes sold to Saudi Arabia might at some future time fall into the hands of anti-American revolutionaries in Saudi Arabia or another Arab country.

Waxman also noted that many Congressmen are angered by the fact that the Reagan proposal directly violates promises made to Congress in 1978 when the Saudis were sold the original F-15 fighter planes. At that time Congress was explicitly assured that the air-to-air missiles and extra fuel tanks now sought by President Reagan, would never be made available to the Saudis. The F-15 sale was contingent on these assurances.

Waxman, one of Israel's staunchest supporters in Congress, said he was determined that the effort to stop the Saudi deal not be lost as a result of over-confidence.

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"Things look good now, but this is a volatile place. We will continue to work on every single member of Congress whose views we have any chance of influencing. The outcome of this battle may determine whether or not there is another Middle East war in the next few years."

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